

From: Joseph Esrey
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 7:56pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern,

I am an ordinary consumer with no personal ties to the computing industry other than my own interest and enthusiasm for it. I am not presently employed by anyone in the computer industry, and having gotten my BA in Anthropology, I do not anticipate being so in the future. I am writing not as someone with any financial interest for or against Microsoft; I am merely an ordinary citizen who has been repeatedly outraged by what I see as the many, many transgressions of this company, and the way it repeatedly eludes penalty for its actions.

As one who regularly uses a computer and is enthusiastic about it, I have followed the activities of Microsoft with interest and alarm. From all I have seen in the last few years of watching this industry, Microsoft has consistently demonstrated a wanton disregard for ethical business practices or the best interest of its customers. While competition and self-interest are natural directives in the business world, Microsoft has repeatedly overstepped the boundaries of ethics, and quite likely even law, in its ambition. It has repeatedly thumbed its nose at attempts to curb its objectionable behavior; its callous disregard for ethics or fair play is matched only by its appetites for power and profits. Many other companies find themselves paralyzed by this company; the ways in which Microsoft has retarded and stifled innovation are too numerous to count (though ironically, Microsoft frequently paints itself as an innovator, despite having originated little of value to the computing world). Microsoft has given every indication that it desires more and more power, and with the increasing pervasiveness of the electronic world in our culture it stands to hold greater sway over even the most mundane and fundamental parts of everyday life. I for one did not invite this presence into my existence, yet I find it difficult to avoid it.

Even when faced with punitive action, Microsoft has consistently demonstrated extraordinary arrogance in its behavior and its will to extend its monopolies. The recent example of its proposal to "pay" for its crimes by flooding schools with cheap-to-produce software materials that would strengthen its market penetration in schools while simultaneously avoiding paying more than a fraction of the fines it wished to portray itself as paying was simply the most recent instance of this.

Microsoft has shown itself to be above no means in trying to portray itself as a victim, to the point of forging letters from dead people in attempting to create the illusion of grassroots support. I strongly urge

you to hold Microsoft truly accountable to its crimes, and to levy a real, significant, serious penalty against the company.

Sincerely,

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